



### National Literacy Campaigns and Movements: Historical and Comparative Perspectives

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Major campaigns to raise levels of literacy have taken place for centuries and share many common elements. But despite literary campaigns spanning over five decades, 860 million adults still lack minimal ability to read, write, and calculate. Why is literacy of such great importance and why have so many years of campaigning for it not been successful in fully overcoming this obstacle? *National Literacy Campaigns and Movements* explores these questions by examining campaigns in vastly different societies from a historical and comparative perspective.

The volume focuses on literacy movements from the past, including those of Reformation Germany, early modern Sweden and Scotland, nineteenth-century United States, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russia and the Soviet Union, pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary China, and Tanzania, Cuba, Nicaragua, and India. Contributors analyze literacy goals and outcomes in specific contexts. The editors distinguish quantitative and qualitative dimensions of literacy activities, such as the difference between the spread of literacy and patterns of its use. The common enterprise of this book is to expand upon the contributors' previous research to include a comparative dimension.

This book offers the first systematic attempt to examine, critically and comparatively, the concepts and facts of large-scale literacy campaigns in more than a dozen societies over nearly five-hundred years. It offers a valuable historical lesson not only for historians, but also for educators: that instead of concentrating only on the recent period, we should use the vast and complex history of literacy movements to shed understanding on the present and future of literacy. A major new introduction to this edition asserts recent literary campaigns and the lessons provided by their success and failures. It also describes how the focus of some movements has evolved.



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